The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters of interest to labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
2 BILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1763 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1944 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 34, NO. 36

FACING *the* FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

What would you do if Nazi buzz-bombs started flying overhead and exploding in your vicinity? Fortunately, that is merely a hypothetical question so far as the people of this country are concerned. But Frank Fenton, AFL organization director, had to face it on his recent trip to Europe with a group of labor leaders to inspect the battlefronts. He dropped into our office this morning and told us about his experiences in London and in France.

"I was asleep in my hotel in London when the first blast came," Frank said. "The entire building shook. The air seemed thick with the noise of the robot bombs. They sound like dive bombers and come down very fast. Each one seemed headed right for us. Some of the boys went out into the hotel corridors or looked out the window to see what was happening in the streets. But not me. I remembered the advice of Sir Walter Citrine, the British labor leader; I dived under the bed and stayed there until the blitz was over."

The next night Frank stood on the English Channel coast beside an anti-aircraft post where the British try to shoot down or intercept the buzz-bombs as they fly over on the way to London. But although he remained on the lookout until four o'clock in the morning, not a single one of the deadly missiles came over. Remembering the heavy damage and the wanton loss of life these bombs have caused in the London area, Frank was not a bit disappointed by their absence.

Meeting A Friend

In France, one of the first persons Frank ran into was young Henry Kaiser, former assistant to Judge Patterson, now serving in the armed forces. Kaiser, a brilliant attorney who handled many important legal cases for the AFL, was overjoyed to see Frank and looking forward to an early victory over the Nazis.

Traveling deeper into Normandy, Frank was shocked to see the havoc and destruction caused by the heavy air, sea and land bombardments which preceded the break-through and the rout of the Nazi armies.

"Most of the buildings in Normandy are built of brick and stone," Frank said. "Many of them are now nothing but rubble. I didn't see anywhere a group of undamaged buildings."

But this initial destruction saved lots of damage in other parts of France because once the Nazis were forced to run, they didn't dare stop and defend each town. So many districts of France and Belgium have been spared from the ruin which would have resulted from a slow, step-by-step defense.

Along the highways, Frank saw evidence of considerable destruction of American and Allied equipment, but nothing to compare with the wholesale wrecking of German supplies.

"The sides of the roads and the fields were just littered with Nazi trucks, tanks and guns which had been blasted and torn out of shape," Frank reported. "No wonder they couldn't put up a better fight after the breakthrough. They didn't have much left to fight with."

Rolling To Victory

On the other hand, tremendous recovery of American armed equipment keep pouring into France in almost unbelievable quantities, Frank said.

"The roads are a solid line of tanks, trucks and moving men," he said. "How in the world the German can stop them anywhere is beyond me."

While in France, Frank talked to some of the leaders in that country and was informed that the labor movement in France had been a potent factor in the underground resistance to the Nazis. As in Italy, the workers of France never gave up and when opportunity struck they helped our advancing forces by making life miserable for the Nazis.

Frank also had a chance to talk to some of the Nazi prisoners. One German Sergeant whom he interviewed declared very flatly that all he knew about the rights and wrongs of war was what Hitler would tell him on the subject. But regardless of such considerations, this prisoner said he and the rest of the German soldiers were sick and disgusted with war and fighting and prayed daily for peace. Most of the prisoners were either younger than nineteen or older than forty, indicating that the cream of Germany's manpower has been wiped out.

From what he is of American G. I. Joes, Frank really got lyrical talking about the services the Army nurses are rendering. Their tireless work is saving many lives, he said, and their spirit reacts better than a shot-in-the-arm on the sick and wounded.

How do the boys in uniform feel about labor, we asked finally. "Well," said Frank, "all this talk about labor is a lot of bunk. They all realize labor is backing them up on the home front and battling to protect their standards. What they want when the war is over is a good job at good pay. And they know labor is in there pitching for them."

High Wages Will Speed Recovery, Green Says; Meany Calls Lasting Peace No. 1 Objective

After Victory Wars Must Be Abolished And Jobs For All Provided, Meany Tells Labor Day Crowd In Canada

Toronto—Establishment of enduring world peace must be labor's No. 1 post-war objective, AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany declared in an address before an international Labor Day celebration here.

Mr. Meany issued a stern warning against the antiquated and ineffectual policy of "laissez-faire", or do nothing, in meeting the challenge of abolishing future wars and of providing an economy with jobs for all.

"Now, with victory in sight, it becomes our duty—the duty of every working man and woman—to make our voices and desires heard by our governments, so that they will know what we want and waste no time in providing it," Mr. Meany urged.

The AFL leader praised the war record of the United States and Canada both on the battlefields and on the production line. Both labor and the armed forces will keep up the fight relentlessly, he predicted, "until this war against the enemies of mankind is brought to a victorious conclusion."

Turning then to the problems of the post-war period, Mr. Meany continued:

"It is the position of the American Federation of Labor that if we, as peace-loving nations, wish to be saved from future wars, we must join independently with the like-minded nations to prevent any overtone nation from resorting to war. We believe that cooperation which has served us so effectively in coping with the aggressors during this war, must be our reliance in taking care of any future would-be aggressor the moment he lifts his head.

"The solution may not be simple, but the problem is. The problem is to provide the force with which to carry out the decision to have peace endure after the Axis has been defeated. In our communities we do not expect our local governments to maintain law and order without giving them the necessary force to impose the desires of the law-abiding majority upon the handful of criminals. In our shrunken world, we cannot expect an international organization without teeth to be able to maintain international law and order. No, the answer to the problem is to have an international organization, made up not only of the major powers but of all the peace-loving countries of the world, and to arm this agency with police powers which it will not hesitate to use promptly and effectively against those who respect no law except the law of force."

Mr. Meany then discussed the attainment of full employment, in the days and years after the war. He said:

"The position of the American Federation of Labor on this subject is that jobs must be provided for everybody who wants and is able to fill a job. For the men who will be returning from the service as dependents, we must provide life. For the men and women who have been working in the war plants, manufacturing the things with which the servicemen fought, and who will be released from these jobs when peace comes.

"We of the American Federation of Labor believe in and uphold our economic system against rival systems, but we do not accept the theory that under our economic system recurring periods of mass unemployment and mass misery are unavoidable. We know that this has happened in the past. But that is no reason why it should happen in the future. It will not happen if we determine not to permit it to happen. It will not happen if we of labor make clear—perfectly clear—that while we realize there must be some dislocation while the change-over is being made from wartime to peacetime production, we will simply not tolerate any recurrence of prolonged mass unemployment.

"There is one thing that this war has made obvious to all of us, and that is that there is no sound reason for suffering and misery in days of peace, that there is no sound reason whatsoever for mass unemployment here on this North American continent, that there is no sound reason for want.

"The way to provide a job for every returning serviceman and a job for every worker is to put ample purchasing power in the hands of the people. Not unless they have the money, they cannot buy the articles which they want and need. And when they cannot buy, the factories stop producing—and workers find themselves on the street, looking for new jobs which are hard to find.

"Hourly wage rates must be readjusted upward prior to any reduction in the work week if we are to have the consumer purchasing power needed to maintain full employment.

"If we are merely to reduce the work week in order to spread the work and allow the income of the individual wage-earner to decline, the workers, as a group, actually would not be in a position to buy anything but the bare necessities of life.

"We of labor see how purchasing power—purchasing power in the hands of the many—is the basis of full employment and prosperity. Business, government and labor must cooperate to maintain this vitally needed purchasing power which comes to the worker from one source alone—his pay envelope. That pay envelope must not be reduced."

TIME OFF WITH PAY ON V-DAY APPROVED

Philadelphia.—The third regional War Labor Board passed a resolution authorizing all firms within its jurisdiction to grant time off, with pay, to their employes on the day Germany is defeated.

The time off is not to exceed one day and the resolution includes firms in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, the District of Columbia and the nine southern counties in New Jersey.

FDR TO OPEN CAMPAIGN AT TEAMSTERS' DINNER

Washington, D. C.—President Roosevelt announced he will deliver his "first political speech" of the campaign at a labor dinner arranged by President Daniel J. Tobin of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters on Sept. 23 at the Hotel Statler in Detroit. Most of the guests at the dinner will be officials of the union.

Four years ago the President similarly opened his political campaign with an address delivered at a dinner of the Teamsters Union in the nation's capital.

The Executive Board of the Teamsters Union, meeting in Chicago, recently unanimously endorsed President Roosevelt for re-election.

CHURCHES PRAISE LABOR'S RECORD

Washington, D. C. — American churches praised labor's war achievements and supported labor's post-war goal of full employment in Labor Day statements.

"Full employment is the key to continued prosperity," the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America declared. A Christian society is under moral obligation so to organize itself that everyone willing and able to work may be guaranteed some meaningful occupation.

"A society which can do this under pressure of total war must also do so under a peacetime economy," the Council added that "organized labor should be encouraged to maintain and strengthen its recent gains" because a strong labor movement would assure a high standard of living.

In another message, the Commission on Justice and Peace of the Central Conference of American Rabbis declared:

"We voice our tribute to the miraculous production achieved by American labor and management. Labor's no-strike pledge has been one of the decisive factors in this historic success. We deplore the strikes which have occurred in many sections of this country, in vital and non-vital industries, in spite of labor's voluntary no-strike pledge for the duration of the war. We, however, want to caution the American public not to condemn all labor for the acts of a few but to remember that the victories achieved by our armed forces are as much a product of our great industries as of the courage of our combat forces. This stupendous record of production is in large measure due to American labor, the overwhelming majority of whom have worked long and long hours, whose increase in wages in many instances has not kept pace with increased living costs. For thousands of workers who have struck there have been millions who have worked faithfully and devotedly faithfully with consecration and devotion."

MACHINISTS TO TRAIN DISABLED WAR VETERANS

Washington, D. C.—Harvey W. Brown, president of the International Association of Machinists, ordered all local lodges of the union to set up Rehabilitation Committees to help train disabled war veterans for self-supporting jobs in industry.

"This war has shown that industry can use handicapped workers," Mr. Brown declared. "Disabled veterans must not be relegated to the scrap heap. They must be afforded every opportunity to get the finest type of training to make an adequate living for themselves and families."

The Machinists Union took the lead eight months ago in offering top leadership to honorably discharged veterans without payment of initiation fees, a step which many other AFL unions have since followed.

AFL President Tells Labor Day Throng That Purchasing Power Of Workers Is Key To Post-War Problems

Jacksonville, Fla.—Speedy reconversion, a high wage policy and cooperation between management, labor and the government to promote full employment can assure at the end of the war the greatest period of prosperity in the nation's history, AFL President William Green told the nation in his Labor Day address.

Speaking to 20,000 shipyard workers during lunch hour at the yards of the St. John's River Shipbuilding Company here and to millions of other Americans over a coast-to-coast NBC network, Mr. Green also emphasized that the basis for economic progress must be the establishment of lasting peace, protected by an international organization of the nations of good will.

The AFL chief hailed American victories on the battlefronts and the production front and insisted it is the nation's paramount duty to provide opportunities for our heroic soldiers and loyal workers when the fighting ends.

He warned against attempts to undermine organized labor by state adoption of "open-shop" amendments, such as are pending in Florida, Arkansas and California.

Asserting that the "dramatic climax of victory is about to ring down the final curtain on the great tragedy of war", Mr. Green devoted a large part of his address to the problems of peace. He said:

"The post-war period is now almost in sight. As we look ahead toward it, we can perceive not only perils to our way of life but great opportunities for making it richer and fuller.

"Our participation in this war have opened our eyes to a realization of the great resources of our country, its tremendous productive capacity and its boundless reserves of energy. If all of this can be accomplished for the destructive purposes of war, how much more important it is that we harness the miraculous machinery of our civilization to fulfill the constructive objectives of peace!

"I predict that with the wholehearted cooperation of labor, management and government the end of the war will be the signal for the start of the greatest period of prosperity in the history of our nation.

"But we must be prepared for temporary reverses and unemployment during the transition from a war-time to a peace-time economy. The test period will come between the time war contracts are cancelled and industry is able to complete its reconversion to peace production.

"Obviously, the national interest demands that this transitional process be completed in the shortest time possible and with least suffering to dispossessed war workers and demobilized servicemen. If recovery is unduly delayed, our economic system will be vitiated. If it is hastened, America will be stronger than ever before.

"Therefore, the American Federation of Labor is pressing with all its power in Washington for the approval of plans for starting reconversion now, without waiting for the end of the war. This should be done and can be done in many instances, especially among small business firms, without interfering with war production.

"The expeditting of reconversion must be accompanied by the adoption of legislation which will provide post-war insurance for the protection payroll of our country—enough to tide them over the hard times until jobs for all will be available. We owe it to our brave soldiers, sailors and marines not to let them be high and dry when the war ends—without jobs and without income, without insurance. We owe the same obligation to the nation's war workers. To disabled war veterans and to those who have been injured in war industries, we must offer full opportunities for re-training, for rehabilitation and for getting jobs that will be *self*-sustaining. These are paramount requirements which Congress cannot dodge nor leave to the separate States for solution.

"American businessmen also face important responsibilities in the post-war period. They must be ready to risk capital in new ventures, they must be willing to expand production to the maximum degree and, above all, they must recognize the imperative necessity of maintaining a high wage policy if our free enterprise system is to endure.

"The enormous debts which our nation has incurred during this war must be redeemed. And to keep the American dollar good we must safeguard our entire economy. The prospects of debt reduction depend largely upon the achievement and maintenance of a high national income—an income widely distributed among the masses of our people in wages, rather than one held by a few in the form of exorbitant profits. A high national income, made possible by full employment, would be the best guarantee of adequate purchasing power and the markets necessary to buy the products of our peace-time industry and farms. Without such purchasing power in the hands of our people, we cannot successfully operate our free system.

"Such threats to the future, however, can be avoided if we keep on the alert for them and if all elements of our population unite in a positive and constructive program of action. I have every confidence that the American people are determined enough and resourceful enough to find the way out of these grave problems.

"But there is an even more fundamental and serious job ahead of us—an international job—which we must complete successfully or jeopardize our own future security and the entire world's. That great task is the winning of the peace.

"We can have no real economic recovery at home, we can enjoy no real security, we can make no safe plans for the future unless we have a world established and guaranteed.

"Therefore, as this war now draws near to its final conclusion, American labor is determined more than ever to see to it that lasting peace will be our reward —a peace that must be fully protected by an international organization of the nations of good will. We regard this war as the great enemy of mankind and must be abolished for all time at any cost.

"Let us solemnly dedicate ourselves on this Labor Day to go forward with renewed energy and zeal to bring the war to a quick and successful conclusion, toward the establishment of lasting peace and toward the attainment, through cooperative production and full employment, of ever higher standards of living in our dearly beloved land."

Nelson Shatters Anti-Labor Lies In Testimony At Senate War Probe

Washington, D. C.—Testifying with factual and official authority, Donald Nelson, chairman of the War Production Board, shattered the myths and slanders that have been circulated about labor's record in war production.

Mr. Nelson gave his testimony before the Senate War Investigating Committee shortly before he departed for China on a special assignment by President Roosevelt. His report may be told behind closed doors but the committee decided the revelations were so important that they were released for publication.

To show how effectively Mr. Nelson blasted the anti-labor lies, we present below numbered paragraphs stating first the charges against labor and Nelson's replies:

1—That war production is practically stopping.

Nelson: "The production situation at the present time is good, with the exception of a few bad spots which we have always had in the past two and a half years. Today they are relatively small compared to the problems we have licked in the past. I feel they can be licked, they will be licked and they will be licked on time . . .

2—That workers have been letting down on the job and not backing up the fighters to the limit.

Nelson: "Since the outbreak of the war, American labor and industry have cooperated with government agencies to the limit in meeting the stiff schedules of war production . . . We have had our production problems but I know of none which has not been solved on time by the active and close cooperation of labor business and the government. . . Workers have traveled from one end of the country to the other on the jobs that was necessary."

3—That workers are deserting war jobs and washing into civilian jobs.

Nelson: "We can find very little evidence of such labor turnover . . . All our people have investigated the problem and find very little of it. . . Labor turnover has been reduced, mostly due to natural causes, such as improvement in techniques and efficiency of workers, rather than out-migration. As a matter of fact, layoffs are greater than the number of people who move of their own accord."

4—That a critical manpower shortage exists.

Nelson: "Employment in munitions industries has been moving steadily at the rate of about 100,000 a month since 1943. . . owing principally to an increase in the efficiency of some of the great labor-consuming war industries . . . War production does not need more than 100,000 of the 700,000 already released from munitions industries. . . Current manpower problems consist primarily of the need to maintain or increase employment in specific localities and in a small number of individual plants."

5—That, because of the supposed stringent manpower situation, recent drastic labor controls, practically equivalent to a "labor draft," are necessary.

Nelson: "Each of the problems we have had so far is carefully worked out as it is to be licked. These problems will not be solved by letting loose a blunderbuss against the whole manpower situation or by general edicts and broad limitations on the use of labor."

During the session, some of the Senators asked Nelson how the WPB reconciled the army scare about manpower shortages with the wholesale layoffs in the past. Nelson replied:

"We just don't attempt to," Nelson replied.

Civilian Production Curbs To End When Nazis Surrender, WPB Decides

Washington, D. C.—The War Production Board voted unanimously to authorize virtually unrestricted civilian production immediately after the Victory in Europe defeat, retaining only a minimum of controls to finish the job.

An expected slash of 40 percent in war production within three months after V-Day, which will release many more than four million workers from war employment provided the basis for the sensational announcement by J. A. Krug, acting chairman of the WPB, stated.

"This means that all manufacturers can use any plant and any materials that are not needed for military production, except those specifically WPB said.

Simply stated, the production of automobiles, electric refrigerators, electric washing machines and other items, which have not been made since shortly after Pearl Harbor, may be resumed just as rapidly as plants are cleared of war production and American industry's ingenuity and enterprise gets them rolling.

A policy of cancelling war contracts first in those plants which produced civilian goods before the war has already been announced by WPB and War Mobilization Director James F. Byrnes has set up a four-man interagency committee to plan the disposal of Government-owned plants to create maximum civilian production and employment.

Almost all controls over materials except those absolutely necessary to assure the war production needed to beat Japan will be removed immediately upon the defeat of Germany, WPB said.

However, the bureau's organization and powers will be retained until the reconversion program is complete and Japan

"Industry is to be allowed its own way, according to the availability of markets, men, materials and plants to do the swiftest and most effective job possible of restoring production, making whatever people want and affording maximum employment just as quickly as possible," WPB said.

AFL UNIONS TRIUMPH IN SHIPYARD ELECTION

Superior, Wis.—AFL unions won a smashing victory in a National Labor Relations Board election among employes of the Globe Shipyard here.

The AFL vote totalled 1,141 to only 319 for the CIO.

William F. Wright, AFL organizer, reported the outcome of the collective bargaining poll to President Green, who expressed pleasure over the result.

NOTICE! TO LABOR EDITORS

Washington, D. C.—With this issue we are sending you proofs of a series of six cartoons, carrying timely and important messages in connection with the Victory Bond Drive.

They are designed to keep all Americans on the alert against subversive propaganda which attempts to stir up racial and religious prejudices. To get a free set of six two-column mats of these cartoons, just fill out and mail the enclosed, stamped postcard.

Three-Billion New Road Program Pushed To Provide Post-War Jobs

Washington, D. C.—A $3,875,250,000 road construction program, one of a series of weapons being fashioned in Congress to combat post-war unemployment, is being pressed forward action by Senate leaders.

One of the most ambitious public works programs under consideration, it would provide work for thousands of machinery, its consummation would require the approval of State Legislatures. State funds would be necessary in most instances to supplement proposed federal expenditures totaling $2,075,250,000.

Some 45 legislatures meet in January. Senate Majority Leader Barkley told reporters he will join in an effort to obtain passage during the short fortnight of the current session.

Under the proposal, federal funds would be matched dollar for dollar by the States. Federal expenditures would be spread over three postwar years.

The major provision of the highway bill calls for a Federal contribution of $650,000,000 annually for 3 post-war years. $200,000,000 of which would go for urban highways, $250,000,000 for the Federal-aid highway system and $200,000,000 for farm-to-market roads.

This money would be allotted on the basis of a Federal expenditure of 60 per cent and a State contribution of 40 per cent.

A table prepared by the Public Roads Administration shows that contributions would range from a $31,583,000 annual allotment to New York State down to $2,622,000 to Delaware.

YUGOSLAV FUND URGES GIFTS OF CLOTHING

New York City.—A substantial cargo of new and used clothing has just been shipped to El Shatt, Egypt, for distribution to 25,000 destitute Yugoslav refugees from Nazi brutality, it was announced by the United Yugoslav Relief Fund of America, a member agency of the National War Fund.

Because of the desperate need for clothing not only for these refugees but for the civilian population of Yugoslavia whose liberation is imminent, the Fund issued an urgent appeal to anyone who may have clothing to spare to send it to the Fund's warehouses, 41 West 25th St., N. Y. City.

Ban On Grade Labeling Injures Price Control, Bowles Admits

Washington, D. C. — Confirming the wagings of organized labor, OPA Administrator Bowles told Congress that elimination of grade labeling on canned goods and fruit has made consumers the victims of "widespread price increases."

In a letter to Rep. Clarence Cannon, Bowles declared that the rider attached by Congress on this year's OPA appropriation, banning the use of grade labeling "makes impossible proper enforcement of price ceilings on canned fruit and vegetables."

The underhanded effect of the elimination of grade labeling—which is the setting of Government standards on quality of canned goods—is to permit producers to escape the top prices for food of inferior quality—thus making a mockery of price control.

Bowles asked Rep. Cannon for immediate action by Congress to repeal the rider so that Government grades can be set on the new fruit and vegetable pack.

"Failing such action," Bowles said, "I am bound to advise you that we will not have fair and genuine and effective price control in the field of processed fruits and vegetables."